

Washington, D.C. -- Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. said today that passage of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act helps "to restore an important principle of equal pay for equal work in America." Congressman Jackson joined with his colleagues to pass the bill by a vote of 247 to 171.

Congressman Jackson said, "The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act makes our workplaces fairer and our families more secure. The bill takes affirmative steps to eliminate gender-based wage discrimination and to ensure that women earn what men earn for doing the same job."

The law restores a basic protection against pay discrimination by rectifying the Supreme Court's 2007 decision that overturned precedent and made it more difficult for workers to pursue pay discrimination claims -- stating a pay discrimination charge must be filed within 190 days of the employer's initial decision to pay an employee less. The bill restores prior law, providing that a pay discrimination charge must simply be filed within 180 days of a discriminatory paycheck.

"This bill moves the country closer to eliminating a persistent wage gap, in which women earn just 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man. By some estimates, that wage disparity costs women -- 41 percent of whom are their families' sole source of income -- anywhere from \$400,000 to \$2 million in lost wages over a lifetime," Jackson said.

The bill is supported by a long list of groups including the National Committee on Pay Equity, National Partnership for Women and Families, AARP, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, NAACP, People for the American Way, and the American Bar Association.

"Pay equity helps not only women, but also families, protecting them from incurring lower incomes that pay for essentials such as groceries, doctors' visits and child care. So, when women earn more, the entire family benefits. And, when families benefit, so does America," Jackson concluded.

In his eighth term, Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. sits on the House Appropriations Committee, serving as the fourth most senior Democrat on the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, and Related Agencies as well as the second most senior Democrat of the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs. He also sits on the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. -30-